

Message Text

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SUBJ: FINNISH PRIME MINISTER KALEVI SORSA'S VISIT TO SWEDEN,
AUGUST 26-28, 1974

REF: STOCKHOLM 3839

1. SUMMARY. AT THE INVITATION OF PRIME MINISTER OLOF PALME, THE FINNISH PRIME MINISTER KALEVI SORSA MADE AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO SWEDEN OF THREE DAYS, BEGINNING AUGUST 26. THE TWO COUNTRIES' REPRESENTATIVES REITERATED THEIR VIEWS THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WERE VERY GOOD AND GAVE SPECIAL ATTENTION TO STRENGTHENING ECONOMIC TIES. FORMATION OF A JOINT MINISTERIAL LEVEL BILATERAL ECONOMIC COMMITTEE WAS AGREED TO WHICH WOULD LOOK INTO POSSIBILITIES OF ESTABLISHING NEW JOINT-VENTURES IN FINLAND; DISCUSSIONS WERE HELD ON IMPROVING LABOR FLOW BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES; AND TALKS WERE HELD ON STEPS TO PROVIDE VOTING RIGHTS FOR FINNISH LABOR IN SWEDEN. EMPHASIS ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WAS DESCRIBED BY THE PRESS AS A "GRANDCHILD OF NORDEK", A
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PROPOSED ECONOMIC COOPERATION AGREEMENT WHICH WAS ABORTED

IN 1970. THE VISIT IN SUBSTANCE, ALTHOUGH UNDOUBTEDLY USEFUL TO THE TWO LEADERS, DID NOT PROVIDE FOR ANY SURPRISES. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING THE THREE-DAY VISIT, PRIME MINISTER SORSA MET WITH A NUMBER OF SWEDISH GOVERNMENT LEADERS, INCLUDING PRIME MINISTER OLAF PALME WHO HAD EXTENDED THE INVITATION. PALME IS REPORTED TO HAVE RAISED THE SUBJECT OF STRENGTHEN-INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION, NEED FOR IMPROVED HANDLING OF LABOR FLOW QUESTIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, AND NEED FOR FURTHER STEPS TO PROVIDE VOTING RIGHTS TO FINNISH IMMIGRANTS IN SWEDEN. ONE CONCRETE PROPOSAL WAS FOR A JOINT BILATERAL ECONOMIC COMMITTEE HEADED BY THE MINISTERS OF INDUSTRY OF THE TWO COUNTRIES WHICH WOULD LOOK INTO POSSIBILITIES OF ESTABLISHING NEW JOINT VENTURES IN FINLAND AND WAYS IN WHICH SWEDISH FINANCING MIGHT ASSIST. PRIME MINISTER SORSA INFORMED THE PRESS THAT HE FAVORED THIS IDEA. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE JOINT SWEDISH-FINNISH COMMITTEE WILL REQUIRE FURTHER DISCUSSIONS.

3. THE PROBLEM OF LABOR MOVEMENT HAS BEEN A TROUBLESOME ONE IN THE PAST AND THE TALKS BETWEEN THE TWO PRIME MINISTERS RESULTED IN AN UNDERSTANDING THAT CERTAIN (UNSPECIFIED) ADJUSTMENTS SHOULD BE MADE. TO FURTHER CLOSER COOPERATION IN THIS AREA, THE LABOR MINISTERS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES WILL MEET THIS FALL. TO MEET COMPLAINTS OR DIFFICULTIES OF FINNISH IMMIGRANTS IN SWEDEN, AN UNDERSTANDING WAS REACHED TO MOVE IN THE DIRECTION OF PERMITTING VOTING RIGHTS IN COMMUNAL ELECTIONS IN SWEDEN; AND THERE WILL BE CONTINUING EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN THE PROGRAM PROVIDING SWEDISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN.

4. THE PRESS REACTIONS TO THE VISIT, NOT UNEXPECTEDLY, HAVE BEEN FAVORABLE. WITH RESPECT TO THE AGREEMENT TO ESTABLISH A JOINT SWEDISH-FINNISH COMMITTEE TO LOOK INTO POSSIBILITIES OF ESTABLISHING JOINT-VENTURES IN FINLAND, THE REACTION WAS PARTICULARLY GOOD AND THE PRESS HEAD-LINED THIS DEVELOPMENT AS "A GRANDCHILD OF NORDEK". NORDEK, OF COURSE, FAILED TO BE BORN.
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5. COMMENT. ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES HAS BEEN MOVING FORWARD WITH SWEDISH INDUSTRIES, FACED WITH LABOR SHORTAGES, INCREASINGLY LOOKING TOWARD FINLAND, FOR EXAMPLE IN THE TEXTILE FIELD. THE JOINT SWEDISH-FINNISH COMMITTEE COULD CONTRIBUTE, WHEN ESTABLISHED, TOWARD FURTHER INTEGRATION OF ECONOMIC PLANS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES. POTENTIAL

CONSTRUCTION OF A NATURAL GAS PIPELINE FROM THE USSR
THROUGH FINLAND TO SWEDEN, JOINT INVESTMENTS IN CONSTRU-
TION OF NEW STEEL CAPACITY, AND SWEDISH "FIRST-CLAIM"
ON BUILDING OF NUCLEAR POWERPLANTS IN FINLAND ARE SOME
AREAS WHICH COULD BE AFFECTED. PLANS WHICH MAY EMERGE
OUT OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE FOR JOINT VENTURES MAY NOT BE
AS EXTENSIVE AS WOULD HAVE BEEN UNDER NORDEK BUT
CERTAINLY UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES IN THE TWO
COUNTRIES THERE IS FORTUNATELY A COMPLEMENTARY INTEREST
IN WHICH BOTH CAN BENEFIT THROUGH USE OFFINNISH LABOR
AND SWEDISH FINANICIAL CAPITAL. THE VISIT ITSELF
PROVIDED NO SURPRISES AND MIGHT BE CHARACTERIZED AS ONE
IN WHICH THE
TWO SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC LEADERS REAFFIRMED
OFFICIALLY THE EXISTENCE OF GOOD RELATIONS AND THE
DESIRE TO FURTHER FNEEPEN AND STRENGTHEN THE FOUNDATION
FOR THIS RELATIONSHIP IN THE FUTURE.
STRAUSZ-#HUPE

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